

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00
PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /030 W
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R 072108Z SEP 77
FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4680
INFO AMCONSUL MONTREAL
ALL OTHER CONSULATES IN CANADA BY POUCH

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 OTTAWA 08111

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, CA
SUBJECT: NEW POLICY ADVISOR TO JOE CLARK

1. J. DUNCAN EDMONDS INFORMED DCM SEPTEMBER 4 THAT WITHIN APPROXIMATELY 10 DAYS THERE WILL BE PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS APPOINTMENT AS "SENIOR POLICY ADVISOR TO LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION". EDMONDS SAID POSITION IS GOVERNMENT-FUNDED AND ALREADY ESTABLISHED, BUT HAS BEEN VACANT SINCE JOE CLARK BECAME LEADER OF PROGRESSIVE CONSERVATIVE (PC) PARTY.

2. EDMONDS IS CURRENTLY PARTNER IN "PUBLIC AFFAIRS INTERNATIONAL", OTTAWA-BASED CONSULTING FIRM PROVIDING PUBLIC AFFAIRS ADVICE TO NATIDNAL AND MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS. CLIENTS INCLUDE IBM AND BOISE CASCADE. EDMONDS IS TAKING LEAVE OF ABSENCE FROM FIRM AND ARRANGING HIS FINANCIAL INTERESTS IN IT SO AS TO AVOID CONFLICT OF INTEREST BUT ALSO ASSURE RE-ENTRY IF HIS NEW POSITION DOES NOT PROVE SATISFYING OR SUCCESSFUL.

3. COMMENT: EDMONDS HAS BECOME WELL KNOWN TO DCM OVER PAST YEAR, AND FOLLOWING OBSERVATIONS ARE DERIVED FROM SEVERAL EARLIER CONVERSATIONS AS WELL AS EDMONDS' RECENT EXPLANATION OF HIS REASONS FOR JOINING CLARK.

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4. EDMONDS GRADUATED FROM UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO AND ATTENDED LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS ON MACKENZIE KING FELLOWSHIP, BUT LEFT THERE AFTER ONLY ONE YEAR IN PH.D. PROGRAM IN ORDER TO JOIN THEN OPPOSITION LEADER LESTER PEARSON AS AIDE WITHIN PEARSON'S INNER CIRCLE. (EDMONDS OBSERVED WRYLY TO DCM THAT HIS NEW JOB WITH CLARK IS ALMOST

PRECISELY ONE HE HAD WITH PEARSON 17 YEARS AGO.) MANY OF EDMONDS' ATTITUDES TOWARD CANADIAN DOMESTIC POLICIES AND WORLD AFFAIRS ISSUES ARE DERIVED FROM PEARSON'S BRAND OF LIBERALISM, WITH BOTH CAPITAL AND SMALL "L". EDMONDS LEFT PEARSON'S STAFF TO HELP ORGANIZE CUSO (CANADIAN VERSION OF PEACE CORPS), IN WHICH HE SERVED IN WEST IRIAN, INDONESIA. IN MID-60'S, EDMONDS TRAVELED EXTENSIVELY IN AFRICA ARRANGING PEACE CORPS-TYPE JOBS FOR CANADIAN YOUNG PEOPLE. IN LATE-60'S, HE RAN UNSUCCESSFULLY FOR LEADERSHIP OF MANITOBA LIBERAL PARTY AND, IN 1969, WAS DEFEATED AS LIBERAL CANDIDATE FOR MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

5. DESPITE LONG-STANDING LIBERAL PARTY CREDENTIALS, EDMONDS HAS BECOME INCREASINGLY DISENCHANTED WITH TRUDEAU GOVERNMENT. HE HAS NEVER LIKED TRUDEAU'S PERSONAL STYLE, AND HAS BECOME MORE AND MORE CRITICAL OF TRUDEAU'S STEWARDSHIP. HE FAULTS TRUDEAU FOR MISMANAGING NATIONAL UNITY ISSUE, SPECIFICALLY FOR EMBARKING ON COSTLY AND SOCIALLY DISRUPTIVE BILINGUALISM PROGRAM WHICH, IN EDMONDS' VIEW, HAS DONE MORE HARM THAN GOOD TO CAUSE OF UNITY. MORE RECENTLY, EDMONDS HAS BEEN CRITICAL OF GOVERNMENT'S ECONOMIC POLICIES. HE BELIEVES WAGE AND PRICE CONTROLS (EXERCISED THROUGH ANTI-INFLATION BOARD) SHOULD HAVE BEEN TERMINATED BEFORE NOW. HE ALSO EXPRESSED ASTONISHMENT THAT CANADIAN DOLLAR HAS BEEN DEVALUED APPROXIMATELY 10 PERCENT AGAINST U. S. DOLLAR WITHIN PAST SEVEN MONTHS WITHOUT ANY PUBLIC OR

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATE OF IMPLICATIONS OF THIS CHANGE.

6. EDMONDS' POLITICAL OUTLOOK IS CURIOUS MIXTURE OF SMALL "L" LIBERALISM, POPULISM, AND ADHERENCE TO "OLD VIRTUES" OF HARD WORK, THRIFT, AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY. THIS MIXTURE EXPLAINS IN PART HIS DISENCHANTMENT WITH TRUDEAU, WHOM HE CONSIDERS BRILLIANT BUT FLASHY AND OVERLY INCLINED TO DAZZLE VOTERS WITH VERBAL PYROTECHNICS RATHER THAN GIVING THEM PRUDENT GOVERNMENT PROVIDING FOR BREAD AND BUTTER NEEDS.

7. EDMONDS TOLD DCM THAT HE WILL BE WORKING DIRECTLY FOR JOE CLARK, AND THAT WHILE OTHER SENIOR PC POLITICIANS (HE MENTIONED JAMES GILLIES) ARE AWARE OF AND SUPPORT APPOINTMENT, CHOICE WAS ENTIRELY CLARK'S. HE DOES NOT EXPECT HIS RESPONSIBILITIES TO OVERLAP WITH THOSE OF BILL NEVILLE, CLARK'S PRIMARY ASSISTANT FOR PARTY AFFAIRS AND FOR MANAGING PARTY'S ROLE AS PARLIAMENTARY OPPOSITION. RATHER, EDMONDS EXPECTS TO EMBARK ON SERIES OF POLICY INQUIRIES AND PAPERS WHICH WILL ASSIST CLARK IN DETERMINING WHAT DIRECTION HE WISHES TO LEAD THE PARTY AND, HE HOPES, THE COUNTRY.

8. EDMONDS HAS GREAT ADMIRATION FOR U.S., AND HAS MANY FRIENDS AND ACQUAINTANCES AMONG AMERICANS. HE HAS INDICATED TO DCM ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS PERSONAL DESIRE THAT

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 OTTAWA 08111

U.S.-CANADIAN RELATIONSHIP BECOME EVER CLOSER. INDEED, HE WOULD WELCOME SOME FORMAL CONFEDERAL RELATIONSHIP IF THAT EVER BECAME POLITICALLY POSSIBLE.

9. EDMONDS COMES ACROSS AS PUBLIC-SPIRITED CITIZEN, WITH DEGREE OF EARNEST CONVICTION WHICH PROBABLY EXCEEDS HIS CRITICAL FACULTIES AND SENSE OF WHAT IS POSSIBLE. IN DISCUSSING HIS NEW JOB, EDMONDS SAID ONE PARTNER IN HIS FIRM, HIMSELF A DEDICATED AND ACTIVE MEMBER OF LIBERAL PARTY, EXPRESSED INCREDULITY THAT EDMONDS WOULD THINK OF JOINING SUCH "LOSING PROPOSITION" AS JOE CLARK AND PC BEFORE ELECTION IN WHICH PC WILL "PROBABLY BE CLOBBED". EDMONDS SAID HIS RESPONSE HAD BEEN NOT TO DENY POOR CURRENT PROSPECTS OF CLARK AND PC, BUT TO ASSERT HIS OWN SENSE OF CIVIC OBLIGATION TO INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT IN A BETTER DIRECTION, AS HE SAW IT. DUEMLING

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